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THE BULLETIN OF THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART CLEVELAND, OHIO

FIRST YEAR

FEBRUARY, 1915

NUMBER FOUR

A MYRINA FIGURINE

The Museum has received from Harold W. Parsons, of Boston, a terra-cotta figurine of a *Dancing Eros*, from Myrina in Asia Minor, dating about the third century B. C.

Mr. Parsons writes that there are distinctive types of these figurines, and even distinctive clays, which come from Smyrna, Myrina and Pergomon. This particular specimen was excavated from the site of ancient Myrina, in Smyrna. The necropolis was discovered in 1870, and excavations were carried on by the owner of the collection from which this figurine came.

These figurines, made as ex-votos for shrines, as dolls, playthings, and objects for the house, and sometimes as miniatures of great statues of antiquity, were usually buried with the dead. Being esteemed by the ancients, they were carried to various parts of Magna Grecia, but only at Myrina and Tanagra, have terra-cottas of this date been found in quantity.

The maker of these figurines first modeled his figure in clay or wax, then made a piece mould from which he cast the desired number, pouring the liquid clay into the mould, where, as it hardened, it shrank sufficiently to allow of its being lifted out. The pieces from the various sections of the mould were then fixed together, before they were quite dry, by liquid clay applied with a brush to the edges. The figurine was then fired in an oven until it was baked and hardened, a vent-hole being left in the back to permit of the steam's escaping. The figures were often made up of many pieces; as many as fourteen in one instance. Heads, arms, legs, bodies, etc., could thus be varied and a great number of different poses obtained, which accounts for the fact that a head often seems too small or too large for the body. Finally the figurine was covered with a white liquid slip which furnished a good ground for color. Eyes, lips, hair, etc., were painted, and gold ornaments, etc., were indicated by spots of gilt. In most cases this white slip has cracked off with time and almost entirely disappeared.